

9/28/87

### Space Leadership Definition

A basic goal of United States space policy is to maintain United States space leadership. Maintaining United States space leadership requires that the U.S. establish technical, scientific, and programmatic goals and objectives for activities in space beneficial to the interests of the U.S. and that the U.S. has the requisite capability and commitment to achieve these goals and objectives. This does not require that the United States be preeminent in all areas and disciplines of space enterprise.

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NASA COMMENTS ON SPACE LEADERSHIP DEFINITION

Leadership is a multi-faceted concept. For civil space purposes, it includes at least the following elements:

- o Preeminence Among Nations. The current space policy baseline provides for U.S. preeminence in "critical major space activities" (III.b.(1)), a reasonably measurable test of leadership. The concept of preeminence draws attention to the requirement for clear accomplishments superior to the achievements of others. Preeminence depends on Presidential approval of key goals and priorities, and continuing support of agency implementing programs to achieve targeted objectives.
- o Cooperative International Relationships. A supplementary measure of leadership is the extent to which other countries seek cooperation and involvement in U.S. space programs. Space-faring nations will be eager to engage in cooperative or joint ventures with a leading nation in order to remain as knowledgeable and competitive as possible. Visible and significant space accomplishments demonstrate prowess and engender desire to associate with U.S. space activities.
- o Perceptions. Another measure of space leadership is the extent to which the U.S. is perceived as leader in the eyes of opinion leaders and the interested public, both here and abroad. The perception of leadership depends on U.S. space goals and programs being seen as more challenging, significant, innovative, and beneficial than those of other contenders -- with a strong national resolve to continue to prevail.

In the final analysis, there is a subjective but powerful test of leadership. As history has shown -- painfully with Sputnik and Vostok I, and proudly with Apollo -- the world knows it when it sees it.



*Bureau of Oceans and International  
Environmental and Scientific Affairs*

*Washington, D.C. 20520*

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MEMORANDUM

TO: NSC - Colonel DeKok  
FROM: OES/SAT - Michael A.G. Michaud *M*  
SUBJECT: Definition of Space Leadership  
REF: Your Memorandum of September 21, 1987

The Department of State does not concur in the proposed definition of space leadership.

We believe that space leadership must refer to the position of the United States in relation to other nations. It is a relative measure, not an absolute one. In addition, it should be recognized that leadership is as much a matter of perception as it is of operational capabilities.

The Department believes that the IG (Space) and (SIG) Space should not spend a great deal of time arguing about this definition. However, in the interest of being responsive to the NSC Staff, I have attached an alternative definition.

Attachment:

As stated

## Space Leadership

To achieve space leadership is to be perceived by other nations -- allies as well as adversaries -- and by our own citizens as being preeminent in our capability to use and explore space, and as having the will to use that capability. This includes the perceptions that the U.S. is:

- The most influential shaper of the human future in space and the nation with the clearest vision of the future of mankind in space.
- The nation with the boldest, most innovative, and most useful space endeavors.
- The nation best in a position to support space endeavors by its allies and other nations and the most attractive partner for space cooperation, based on technical excellence, programmatic dependability, and political reliability.
- The nation best able to provide space-related goods and services.
- The nation best able to defend its vital national security interests through the use of space technology.